



December 6, 2019

Greetings,

At its meeting in Columbus on April 22, 2019, the General Education Steering Committee appointed in 2017 by the Ohio Department of Higher Education unanimously endorsed six ***Principles of Good Practice*** for general education in Ohio. In one sense, this action represents the capstone of a two-year consultative effort to identify principles that both reflect a consensus of practice and have the potential to prompt significant improvement. In another sense, this effort now begins in earnest, as you and your colleagues seize the opportunity to use these principles to enhance your commitment to more effective general education.

General Education in Ohio: Principles of Good Practice

April 22, 2019

The following principles have emerged from a statewide consultative discussion as priorities that reflect leading thinking and good practice throughout Ohio and that can therefore guide improvements in general education throughout the state.

- 1 Attentive to relevant HLC standards, each Ohio college and university will publish a straightforward, easily understood statement of institutional intent regarding the purposes, emphases, and structure of its general education program.
- 2 Committed to providing their students with knowledge and abilities *that may transcend the content of general education and of traditional disciplines*, Ohio colleges and universities will (a) confirm which knowledge areas their curriculum already addresses, (b) identify any gaps that may be significant in terms of the institution's mission and objectives, and (c) commit to addressing them.
- 3 Aware of documented expectations regarding proficiencies *beyond content knowledge* consistent with student success over the long term, Ohio colleges and universities will (a) confirm which capacities and characteristics their curriculum already addresses, (b) identify any significant gaps, and (c) commit to addressing them.
- 4 Focused on what students should learn rather than what should be taught, Ohio colleges and universities should consider pedagogical approaches not currently in use that might lead to significant gains in learning. They should implement those most consistent with their curricular objectives.

- 5 Acknowledging that effective advising is critical to student success, Ohio colleges and universities should enable and charge advisors (a) to undertake “intentional conversations” with all students concerning the ends and means of general education, (b) to guide students in “navigating” a curriculum that links general education and the major, and (c) to enable students to understand both the value and the usefulness of the general education learning they are pursuing.
- 6 Continuity between general education and the major should be made explicit through clear links between specific priorities of general education and specific expectations of major programs. Effective general education programs, offered in collaboration with majors, should prepare students for further study. Effective majors should affirm and build on the preparation general education provides.

Thank you for supporting this discussion through the participation of your colleagues and through your responses to the poll distributed in January. Chief academic officers have perhaps the most significant role to play in the further strengthening of Ohio’s commitment to more effective general education.

Sincerely,

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Ohio Department of Higher Education